

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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**Editor’s Note:** The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, March 6, 1998

**The President's Radio Address**

*February 28, 1998*

Good morning. This morning I want to talk to you about one of the most important ways we can help all children live up to their God-given potential—giving them the tools they need to master the fundamentals of reading.

This week America got a wakeup call on education. We learned that our high school seniors are lagging behind those in most other industrialized nations in math and science. In a global economy that is increasingly powered by information and technology, this is a very sobering fact. It tells me we can have no higher priority than to transform our K through 12 classrooms in every community. We need smaller classes, better teaching, higher standards, more discipline, greater accountability.

And clearly, we must give our children more help with reading. Currently, 40 percent of our Nation's 8-year-olds are not reading even at the basic level. And those students are far more likely to get discouraged and drop out of school or never to learn what they need to know while they're in school. Failing to read early on is a burden that can bog down a child for life. That's why I launched the America Reads challenge, to make sure all our children can read on their own by the end of the third grade.

Thanks to an amazing outpouring of support, tens of thousands of volunteer tutors are already at work in our communities, giving our children the intensive reading help they need. More than 900 colleges have committed to give their students work study credit for devoting after-school hours to tutoring children. And this year 3,000 new AmeriCorps members and thousands of new senior volunteers will recruit more than 100,000 volunteer reading tutors for our children. We are on track to give extra reading help to 3 million children at risk of falling behind.

But we need Congress' help to meet this goal. This past November, the House of Representatives voted with bipartisan support to promote literacy efforts in the home, the school, the community. Legislation with these goals is now awaiting action in the Senate, which means \$210 million in targeted assistance is now on hold in Washington, not at work in our communities. So today I call on the Senate to pass this legislation without delay. We need it. Our children need it.

This coming Monday, reading out loud to children will be the talk of the Nation. To celebrate the birthday of the late Dr. Seuss, whose much beloved books have sparked the imaginations of children and parents alike for generations, the National Education Association and many other groups are sponsoring the first Read Across America Day. Thousands of people, from baseball star Cal Ripken to the leaders of the Cherokee Nation to the sailors of the U.S.S. *Austin*, will read favorite books and share the joy of reading with children in every part of our country. I encourage parents and grandparents to get involved. Read with your child on Read Across America Day and every day.

Scientists have now shown reading to your children every night before bed can help lay the foundation for his or her life and, in turn, for our Nation's future. Literacy is the key to all learning. Without it, history is a haze, math is a muddle, the Internet is indecipherable, the promise of America is a closed book. But we can change all that. With an army of reading tutors, well-trained teachers, and involved parents, we can make sure every child can read by the third grade. And if we do that, there is no limit, in the words of Dr. Seuss, on the places our children will go.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:22 p.m. on February 26 at the Spanish Rights Center in Oakland, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 28.

## **Remarks on Arrival in Los Angeles, California**

*February 28, 1998*

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to begin by thanking Congressman Gallegly, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, Congressman Sherman, and Gloria Molina and Zev Yaroslavsky for joining me here.

I have just met with some of the people who were hurt by the terrible weather you've had in southern California over the last week, as well as a number of the people who were involved in the rescue effort. Let me begin by saying that our hearts and prayers are with the families who lost their loved ones. I especially want to send our condolences to the families of Officer Rick Stovall and Officer Brit Irvine who gave their lives in the line of service as they responded to the emergency in Santa Maria.

There were many people of all ages who lost their lives in this terrible tragedy. I received a fax from a friend of mine yesterday whose son lost a childhood friend of his, a young fellow student. I met a young woman in there in the meeting who lost her fiance after he had saved the lives of a woman and her three young children.

There is very little that anyone can say at this moment to ease the human loss. We do know that the weather we are experiencing now has been dramatically aggravated because of El Niño. I have visited with families in Florida where 39 people were killed in the worst tornadoes in 50 years, in northern California, and now here today.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has spent a lot of time in southern California in the last 5 years and couple of months since I've been President. I talked with James Lee Witt in some detail before I came down here today. We are determined to do all we can. FEMA is responding swiftly to provide disaster relief funds in 35 counties, including over \$2 million more for Glenn County. The SBA has an outreach office in Orange County, and Federal Highway Administration personnel have already released \$40 million to California for road repairs.

There will be a lot more to be done. The Members of Congress and the local officials

have talked to me about other things that we need to do to deal with the particular problems of people who lost everything or who are still at risk of further natural calamities.

Let me just say today, I want more than anything else to praise the courage of those who worked so hard during this disaster—the fire, the police personnel, the emergency personnel, all the others who were involved; many of them risked their lives, and as we know, two lost their lives—and to praise the courage of the people who have lost everything they have but still have their lives. I want to encourage them, to tell them their fellow Americans are thinking about them, and to pray for tranquil weather as we begin the rebuilding process.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. on the tarmac at Los Angeles International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gloria Molina and Zev Yaroslavsky, members, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; and California Highway Patrol officers Rick Stovall and Brit Irvine.

## **Remarks at a Dinner for Senator Barbara Boxer in Los Angeles**

*February 28, 1998*

Thank you very, very much. First I want to thank all of you for being here for Senator Boxer and for your country. Thank you, Senator Torricelli, not only for being here and for your leadership on behalf of your fellow Democrats in the Senate and some of the people we hope will be joining us, but for always being willing to stand up and fight for what you believe in and not just standing—[applause]—thank you. The longer I stay in Washington, the more I come to appreciate people who will stand up and fight. And I thank you, Senator. [Laughter]

I want to thank Ron and Jan for having us here. I don't believe, if I live to be 100, I don't believe I'd ever get tired of coming to this magnificent place. I'm sure they would get tired of me coming—[laughter]—and are doubtless glad that I am term-limited, but I love coming here.

I want to say just a couple of things tonight—and I've already eliminated all the

stories I was going to tell because all the entertainers will be downgrading me if I tell a joke. Whoopi told me a funny story once, I think it's the funniest joke I ever heard, but I certainly can't tell that. [Laughter] It's not that bad, it's just too bad for me to tell in front of all of you, but it's really funny. [Laughter] If you file by the front table on your way out, she'll be glad to—[laughter]. That's the best I could do.

Hillary and Chelsea actually wanted to be here tonight. We love Barbara Boxer, and she is now a member of our family, or we are a member of her family, or however it works, but anyway, we're all here together. And that's one of the reasons I came. But there are a couple of other reasons I wanted to talk about.

I asked, when I came in, I asked Sim to talk to me about the race and Barbara to talk to me about the race, and they said one of the members of the Republican Party who wishes to oppose Senator Boxer had already spent almost \$6 million on television ads, and that a lot of these television ads are trying to convince the California voters that she has not been a good Senator. Now, you be the judge.

When I introduced the bill in 1993 that reduced the deficit 92 percent before—before—a single dollar had been taken out from the balanced budget bill last year, we didn't have a vote to spare in the Senate—not a single one. Al Gore had to vote for it—it was a tie vote. And as he says, whenever he votes, we win. [Laughter]

You know, being President has had all kinds of humbling experiences. [Laughter] And I'm sure you all have your top-10 list. But if anybody had ever told me 5 years ago I'd wind up being a straight man for Al Gore, I never would have believed that. Such are the burdens of office. [Laughter]

Anyway, we didn't have a vote to spare—one vote. California—you know what it was like in 1992, 1991, 1993. Barbara Boxer voted yes knowing she had a difficult campaign, knowing it would be easier to walk away from, knowing that they'd be pounding the drums and saying all kind of terrible things. Five years later, we're on the verge of the first balanced budget in 30 years. The stock market went from 3,200 to over 8,000. We've

got the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. I think that's a pretty good record.

I don't believe that \$6 million in negative television ads, or \$60 million, or \$600 million should be allowed to wipe away that fundamental truth. That one vote—that one vote—should get her the support of a huge majority of the people of California for reelection to the United States Senate. It's that important.

But that's not all that happened. We also—you heard Senator Boxer talking about the decline in the crime rate now—we put more community police on the street. We were ridiculed for that bill by people like the folks that are advertising against her—ridiculed. Why? Because we also said, "Okay, we'll put more police on the street and put them back on the beat, but we think we should take assault weapons off the street and we ought to spend some money to give kids something positive to do so that they have something to say yes to in life." And we were ridiculed. They said, "Oh, this bill will be a failure; it's pork barrel; it's terrible"; and besides that, we're "trying to take everybody's guns away from them." Well, 5 years later the Brady law has kept over 300,000 people with criminal records from getting handguns. I don't know how many people are alive because of it, but a lot of people. And juvenile crime is going down again, and it's going down most in the communities where the kids are being dealt with as people and being given a positive future. So I think that's enough to justify reelecting Senator Boxer.

And I could give you lots of other examples. I also believe you can just see, watch her standing up here—and she has to stand on this box that then they have to move away for me. But don't kid yourself, it's just a prop. [Laughter] It's designed to disarm the enemy. [Laughter] She's a very large person—a very large person. [Laughter]

Washington is a place where too many people take themselves too seriously, where a lot of people profess to be profoundly religious but actually worship power, and where having a person who shows up every day

more interested in people and interested in power as an instrument of doing good, not as an end in itself, is a very precious commodity. For that reason, Barbara Boxer should be reelected to the United States Senate.

And finally let me say, as I said in the State of the Union Address, Hillary had this idea that we ought to honor the passing of the century and the coming of a new millennium with a set of gifts that she sort of—she gave me this idea, she said we ought to call it, “Remembering the Past and Imagining the Future.” And Barbara Boxer has a good imagination, and she thinks about her children and her grandchildren and the world we want to leave to them. And when the world is changing as fast as it is now, it’s really actually rather difficult to predict what is going to happen next month. And it’s difficult to know with absolute precision what’s going to happen 30 years from now. But we know what challenges we have to face if we want the world to be a positive place 30 years from now.

So all those things that Senator Torricelli talked about—the efforts that we can now make because we do have a strong economy, because we do have budgetary discipline, because things are going well, we can now make an effort we need to imagine that future and to make it come true. That’s what the education and the child care and the health care initiative is about; that’s what the environmental initiatives are about. I don’t think people will be making fun of us much longer, when we talk about climate change and global warming. You look at what El Niño has done this year in America, in southern California; can you imagine what can happen to our climate if the average temperature over the next 50 years went up another couple of degrees? People ask you what global warming is about—it’s about that hole in the interstate here. It’s about mud rushing down and carrying away the lives of innocent people. It’s about malaria rising to the highest known altitudes on other continents and people carrying infections into airports and giving it to other people so now there’s a phenomenon called “airport malaria.”

We like to believe that technology and intelligence and everything just defies all the

laws of gravity and nature; it’s just not so. The good Lord has a way of bringing us back to Earth, and we must return to Earth on this. We’ve got to meet our responsibilities to future generations. We do not have to give up economic prosperity. Every time we faced an environmental challenge in this country for the last 30 years, when we’ve been working on it seriously, every single time people say, well, if you do this you’ll hurt the economy; if you do that it will cost you jobs; if you do the other thing, you’ll set everybody back and people won’t be able to make a good living. It’s been wrong every time; it is wrong now. We will find a way to find greater prosperity if we honor our obligations not only to preserve but actually to restore the planet and reverse this process of climate change that I believe is very destructive. And I hope you will support it.

So there is a lot of stuff to do. We want to establish a medical research fund that will double funding for the National Cancer Institute, dramatically increase funding for the National Institutes of Health, increase overall scientific research spending, establish a space station in the sky that I think is very, very important for what happens here on Earth. And all of that is great and important, and all these issues I hope will be out there. But remember the second half of what we’re trying to do for the millennium. We’re trying to imagine the future, but also remember and honor the past.

And I would just close with this, because it really does matter who these Senators are, what their values are, what kind of memory they have, how they look at the world. They have enormous influence. And, yes, I want to do all these specific things I said. But all these specific things that we should do have to be seen against the background of our progress as a nation from the beginning into the future for, I hope, as long as human beings exist on this planet.

That’s why we want to preserve the Star-Spangled Banner. Believe it or not, we need \$13 million to save the flag that led to our national anthem. We’ve got a lot of work to do just to save the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. And it’s worth doing. There’s a house where Abraham Lincoln and his family used

to spend the summer by the Old Soldier's Home in Washington, D.C.—this little cabin, it's just about to go to pieces. We ought to save that. People pay a big price when they forget where they came from. And here in this county, there are parts of your past I hope you will find a way to save as a part of celebrating a new millennium.

But if you go back through American history and you say, what were we all about when we started—at least what did we say we believed, and where did we fall short, and how do we do better; what was the Civil War about, where did we fall short, and how do we do better; when all these people quit working on the farm and moved to the cities, and all these immigrants came to America around the turn of the century and started working in the factories, were we falling short of our ideals, and how do we do better? What happened in the Depression; what happened in World War II; what happened in the civil rights movement; how did we fall short, and how do we do better? You look at all of it, and think about—just go home tonight and think about this: Why did people come here in the first place? They wanted to get away from arbitrary, abusive, unaccountable power, to be free—remember the Declaration of Independence—to pursue happiness, and to form a more perfect Union so their children could do an even better job of being free to pursue happiness, to form a more perfect Union. Go back and read it, that's what it says.

Now, did we live that way? Of course not. You had to be a white male property owner to have any influence in the beginning. And given my family's history, that means that I would have been much better off than Whoopi's, because we wouldn't have had any property. No, we weren't there. But it was the right idea. Freedom is better than oppression. Freedom, what? Not to have a guaranteed outcome, but pursue your own dream. And to form a more perfect Union so your children after you will do even better—not just materially but spiritually as well. That was the idea. You go back and think

about every single turning point in the whole history of this country, and you will see that we had to ask ourselves the same old questions: How can we deepen the meaning of our freedom; how can we widen the circle of opportunity; how can we form a more perfect Union?

I've had the chance to say many times now in the last several months; I want to say it one more time: The Republican Party represented the dominant party in America for deepening the meaning of our freedom, broadening the circle of opportunity, and forming a more perfect Union from the time Abraham Lincoln laid down his life to save this country until Theodore Roosevelt served as President. But from the time of Woodrow Wilson through Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter down to the present day, we have not always been right, we Democrats, but we have always been on the right side of those three great issues in the 20th century.

If you think about all of these great challenges we face and you listen to the rhetoric and you listen to the arguments that are made, strip it all away and take every single issue, and go home tonight and look at your kids, think about your grandkids or your nieces and nephews or all the people you care about, and ask yourself, "What should I do as a citizen to deepen the meaning of freedom in my country, to widen the circle of opportunity so it embraces everybody, to give us a chance with all this diversity—this brilliant, blazing, confusing, complex diversity—to form a more perfect Union" there may be more than one answer. But surely one answer is electing the people to public office like Barbara Boxer.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Ron and Janet Burkle; comedienne Whoopi Goldberg; and Sim Farar, finance chair for Senator Boxer's reelection campaign committee.



**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Transmitting a Report on  
International Agreements**

*February 27, 1998*

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)*

Pursuant to subsection (b) of the Case-Zablocki Act, (1 U.S.C. 112b(b)), I hereby transmit a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 2.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting a Report on the Trade  
Agreements Program**

*February 28, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2213), I transmit herewith the 1998 Trade Policy Agenda and 1997 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
February 28, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 2.

**Remarks to the Mortgage Bankers  
Association of America**

*March 2, 1998*

Thank you all so much. Thank you, Marc, and Paul Reid and Mike Ferrell and all the officers and staff of the Mortgage Bankers Association; to our national treasurer and members of the National Association of State Treasurers. I'm delighted to be here, along with Frank Raines, my OMB Director, who used to spend some time with some of you, and Gene Sperling and others on our staff.

I have looked forward to this day for a long time, just to be able to thank you for the work that all of you have done in giving America the highest homeownership rate in the history of the Republic. It means a lot to a lot of people out there in the country, and I appreciate your role in this historic achievement. And I thank you very much.

In my State of the Union Address, I called upon all our people to strengthen our country for the new century ahead. Historically, that has always meant deepening the meaning of America's freedom, strengthening our Union, and drawing our people closer together across all the lines that divide us, and clearly, always widening the circle of opportunity.

Now, we are seeing a remarkable increase in the circle of opportunity. In addition to reaching the highest level of homeownership in history, millions of Americans have been able to refinance their mortgages, which has amounted to billions and billions of dollars in tax cuts for families, putting more money in their pockets, freeing up more for investment and savings. Access to capital has spread to minorities who for years have been locked out of the economy. And I appreciate what Marc said about going to New York. We do see increasing homeownership rates for minorities now and I hope it will continue. Our capital markets are the strongest in the world, and clearly, they have played a major role in helping us to do well in this new economy.

Today what I'd like to do is talk to you just for a few minutes about why we have to follow a consistent strategy of fiscal discipline and investment in our future and our people. The strategy that has worked for the last 5 years we must continue into the next century. I also want to talk about how all the discussions surrounding the tax system and the IRS fit into this: what is the right way to cut taxes; what is the right way to reform the IRS; what is the wrong way to do it? I especially want to comment on what I believe strongly is a misguided scheme recently introduced in the Congress that I believe could take us back to policies which have failed us in the past.

These are good times for our country, with a new economy powered by technology, nurtured by the ingenuity of the human mind, enlarged by our newfound fiscal discipline at home, and increasing trade among all nations. Over the past 5 years our new economy has produced now almost 15 million new jobs, with the highest percentage of those jobs in the private sector of any recovery in memory. Unemployment is the lowest in 24 years; business investment is growing at 11 percent, the fastest pace in 30 years; since 1993, family incomes are up about \$2,200.

Today we have fresh new evidence that the economy continues to grow. Personal income rose six-tenths of one percent last month alone. Our social problems, from crime to welfare, are bending to our efforts. The welfare rolls are the lowest in 27 years; the crime rate the lowest in 24 years. We now have, literally, a system in which we have opened the doors of college education to all people in this country who are willing to work for it, with tax credits, with IRA's, with better student loans and tax deductibility for the interest on those loans, more Pell grants, more work-study positions. We are adding 5 million children from working families to the ranks of those with health insurance. Combined with our record levels of homeownership, the American dream is clearly within reach for more and more American families.

This did not happen by accident, but no one alone can claim credit for it. It was the product of a remarkable concerted endeavor by tens of millions of Americans. But it also was supported by the economic policies that we have followed with discipline and consistency over the last 5 years. We moved beyond the sterile debate between those who said Government was the problem and those who said it was the solution to a new way, a new Government for the information age that gives our people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, that is unashamedly a catalyst for new ideas where the old ones don't work, that is a good partner with the private sector.

We have the smallest Government here in Washington since President Kennedy was in office. But it is still more progressive, more active. It is smaller, but the Nation is stronger. We put in place a three-part economic

strategy, rejecting these false choices from the past: first, restoring fiscal discipline and conquering the deficits that hobbled growth, spiked interest rates, and robbed our economy of capital for investment throughout the 1980's; second, investments in our people, in science and technology, in education and job training, and health care, so that everyone has a chance to reap the rewards of growing prosperity; and third, we responded to the global nature of the new economy by opening new markets to our goods and services.

The strategy is clearly working. There is renewed confidence in the American economy. Its stability, its strength, its steady growth are the envy of the world. More than ever we are also investing in the future. A record two-thirds of Americans almost—as Marc said, almost two-thirds—now live in their own homes, and we must finish the job. I agree with you that the most important thing we can do in this session of Congress is to support Secretary Cuomo's plan to raise the FHA loan limit. We can pass it, and we must.

Now, last month I submitted to Congress the first balanced budget in a generation. If we are fortunate and if we can work together with our allies around the world to minimize the impact of the recent difficulties in Asia on our own economy, Mr. Raines says that we'll probably have a balanced budget this year. Instead of deficits, America can now look forward to about a trillion dollars in surpluses over the next 10 years.

Now, that is a tempting target in an election year in Washington. But, first of all, let me remind you they have not materialized yet. And we shouldn't count those chickens before they hatch. Secondly, we should remember what we did to the long-term strength of America when we quadrupled the debt of this country in the 12 years from 1981 through 1992. And we should not repeat that error again. Finally, we shouldn't use the surplus for any new tax cuts or new spending programs until we have confronted the challenge of saving Social Security first. I think that is very important.

All of you are generally familiar with the problem. It's projected that the Social Security Trust Fund will not cover payments starting in the year 2029. That's the year when

all the baby boomers will finally be in the Social Security system, and at presently projected birth and immigration rates and labor force participation rates, it means that there will be only about two people working for every person drawing Social Security.

Now, those things could all change to some extent, but no matter what, it is clear that the generation of the baby boomers entering the Social Security system will be quite larger than the generation just following it. Indeed, the generation now in public schools, starting last year, is the first generation in American history larger than the baby boom generation. I do not know a single person my age or younger—because I'm the oldest of the baby boomers—I hate that, but it's true—[laughter]—I don't know a single person who doesn't think about the problems we could create for our children if we don't make the changes now in the Social Security system we need to. No one wants to burden our children and our ability—their ability to raise our grandchildren.

On the other hand, it is important to remember that it's just since 1985 that senior citizens have been less poor than the rest of us. That is an astonishing achievement for a country that 60 years ago had 70 percent of its seniors living below the poverty line, many of them in abject poverty. Now, if we make small changes today with discipline, we can deal with this issue. And I also want to point out something all of you know, which is that hardly anybody—even though Social Security helps people keep body and soul together—hardly anybody in America can retire and maintain his or her standard of living on Social Security alone. So we must also do more to help Americans save for their own retirement. We've done a lot of work with the 401(k) plans and other things; we need to do more.

So we're going to work in this next year very hard, in what I hope will be a completely nonpartisan way, to acquaint the American people with the details of the challenge before us, to explore all the alternatives, and then to come up with a solution, which I hope the Congress will pass early next year to deal with this. You say, well if you pass it in 1999, 2029, that's 30 years away. First of all, those of you in the audience who are

my age or older know that 30 years can pass in the flash of an eye. But secondly, I would remind everyone that the longer we wait to deal with this, the more severe actions will be required to deal with it. If we move now, with modest but disciplined changes, we can do a great thing to ensure the financial strength of America in the 21st century and to preserve the compact that binds us together across the generations. I cannot emphasize how strongly I feel about this.

Now, there are other economic challenges we face as well, and I'll just mention two very briefly. One is, how do we extend the benefits of enterprise that have brought so much to America in the last few years to those who still have not felt the impact of the economic recovery, principally in the inner cities and isolated rural areas? We have a whole range of proposals in that regard, a lot of them coming out of Secretary Cuomo, a lot of them coming out of the Vice President's community empowerment initiative, but I think it is very important that we recognize that these people who are still unemployed or underemployed are the great target we have for the rest of us to keep the economy growing with low inflation, so we can do what is morally right to try to expand opportunity to people who still don't have it and help the overall American economy as well.

The second point I'd like to make is that if we want to continue to see this economy grow, we have to have people who are skilled enough and well trained enough and well educated enough to take positions in tomorrow's economy, not yesterday's economy. There was a study which came out a couple of weeks ago, I can't remember the exact number, but there was something like nearly 400,000 openings in America today for people in information technology related jobs. And when you go to some of our larger inner-city neighborhoods where the unemployment rate is still 10 percent, you say, well, what is wrong with this picture? Well, we got one indication of what is wrong with this picture last week when we saw that our 12th graders in the International Math and Science Survey scored 19th among 21 countries in their performance in math and science.

So the other big economic issue before America is how to make our system of elementary and secondary education as good as our system of higher education. No one doubts that we have the best system of colleges and universities in the world; we should not rest, and we cannot rest, until we have the best elementary and secondary education in the world. It is a major economic issue for our country.

Anyway, it's against this background that I think you have to see the emerging debate, or, if you will, the continuing debate, on the tax system—what taxes should be cut and how? And the IRS, how should we go about collecting taxes? This is a hazardous discussion that it's easier for me to enter into maybe because I'm not on the ballot anymore—[laughter]—since there's no such thing as a positive thing anyone ever wants to say about this.

But we need to think about it. This debate can be a very healthy thing. We should always be examining, you know, whether there are changes in the tax system we could have which would either be fairer or which would achieve our common objectives more or which would grow the economy faster. And we should always be looking for ways that, through either common sense or new technology, we can ease the burden on our people of paying taxes—always. The door should never be shut to reform, and there will always be more to do no matter what system we adopt. I think all of us know that.

But the point I want to make today is that this debate must occur within the context of our commitment to a long-term economic strategy that will work for our people. It should occur within a context of our commitment to maintain economic confidence in the future. There is a right and a wrong way to do reform. And the right way must involve our continued commitment to fiscal discipline, to investing in our people, and to making the future a predictable and confident one in terms of our economic policy.

Now, within that context, over the last 5 years we've worked hard to reform our tax laws. We've honored our responsibilities as parents with the \$500-per-child tax credit. We've rewarded work by more than doubling the earned-income tax credit, which basically

is designed to say if you're a parent and you work 40 hours a week, your child ought not to be in poverty. Over 2 million children have been lifted out of poverty because of the changes in the earned income tax credit.

We've recognized the importance and the cost of college education with the HOPE scholarship tax credit, which is worth \$1,500 a year for the first 2 years of college, lifetime learning credits for junior and senior years and graduate school, the tax deductibility of student loan interest payments, and other initiatives.

We've encouraged homeownership by eliminating capital gains on almost all home sales. And we've helped Americans save for their retirement, for their education, and health care costs, by expanding IRA's. At the same time, billions of dollars in tax loopholes that were more wasteful have been closed.

This year, the balanced budget proposal I presented to Congress continues to help working families with new tax cuts to make child care more affordable, our economy stronger, and our environment cleaner by meeting the challenge of climate change.

We also had to continue our work to improve the operations of the IRS. Like every American and the majority of IRS employees, who are trying hard to do their jobs well, I get outraged when I hear about abuses in the IRS. But we are making changes, and we must continue to do so. I've already signed into law 40 tax simplification measures and a new Taxpayer Bill of Rights.

As of February the 20th, less than 2 weeks ago, 10.7 million Americans had filed their tax returns electronically for this year; that's a 19 percent increase over last year. Three-point-eight million Americans have filed by telephone; that's a 25 percent increase over last year. The average telephone conversation is 10 minutes. I think that's pretty good, and I hope more will continue to do that.

We are having problem resolution days, which have been widely publicized by the media, and I thank them for that. In every IRS district, at least once a month, where the IRS employees are open—they open the offices at night or on the weekends—people come in with their tax problems, and we try to resolve them in a quick and informal way.

I think all these things are very important. We just approved new regulations to protect so-called innocent spouses who are left with tax liabilities by their spouses, that they had no role in undertaking. Now, there's more to do, but a lot has been done. Among the new reforms proposed are new citizen advocacy panels, new systems to file taxes by phone or computer to make it even more easy and more widely used, stronger taxpayer advocates, phone lines open 24 hours a day, further relief for innocent taxpayers.

Late last year the House passed these reforms almost unanimously. I think there were over 400 votes for them, and only 3 or 4 against. So again let me say, I hope that the Senate will quickly pass this legislation and send it to me for my signature. It's a good bill, and it will do a lot of good for Americans.

Now, we need to continue to do these kinds of things, and we need to be open to broader reforms of the tax system. But there are some people in Congress who have made a proposal that I think would not fit within the formula of economic discipline and confidence that I believe we have to stay with. Under the guise of reform, they have proposed what, to me, is an irresponsible scheme—to eliminate our tax laws without any system to replace them.

Now, at first glance, this might look good. "Sunset the Tax Code. When everybody knows there will be no more Tax Code, that will shake everyone up, and then they will come forward with a responsible alternative. And trust me, everything will be fine." That's the message. Once you know that the old code is gone and on a date certain it won't be there, well, everyone will surely have to come up with something, and it must be something that will be better. "Don't worry about the details." That's what this proposal is, and it has a lot of appeal. It's like saying you can't go on a diet until the refrigerator is empty. But if you think about it, it only works if you know that you can fill the refrigerator up again and what will be in there.

Now, instead of proposing reform, this proposal is really economic uncertainty. What we have done is to restore some confidence and predictability to the American economy. When you knew that we were going to stay on a path of fiscal discipline

and the deficit was not going to go to \$300 billion a year, was not going to go to \$370 billion a year—which was what it was predicted to be for this year when I took office—instead of \$10 billion or zero, which is what it's going to be, this is a way of going back to that era—a total economic uncertainty.

What would it do? Think about your business. It would cripple families' and businesses' ability to plan and save for the future while the uncertainty existed. It would undermine the fiscal progress of the last 5 years. No one concerned about fighting crime would even think about saying, "Well, 3 years from now we're going to throw out the criminal code, and we'll figure out what to put in its place." No one would do that. That is what this proposal is. That is exactly what some people in Congress are proposing to do.

Now, think about what repealing the tax laws with no known alternative would mean. It would mean that you would know there would be no home mortgage deduction, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. There might be no charitable contribution deduction, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. We would repeal the Roth IRA, but you wouldn't know what would be in its place. All that would be certain about this proposal is uncertainty. And again I say, as all of you in this room well know, uncertainty is the enemy of economic growth.

We live in a world where there is a lot of change and unpredictability and uncertainty by definition in the nature of this new economy. But to do well, you have to at least know what the rules are. Our economy is growing because consumer confidence and business investment are at record highs. Last week the two indexes of consumer confidence came out. One was at a 30-year high; the other was at an all-time high. What people think is going to happen, as all of you know, in an economy is just as important as what, in fact, is happening today.

Almost every business investment has tax consequences. With no ability to predict the consequences, businesses might decide to postpone, cancel, or pare back on plans to buy new computers, build a new factory, hire new workers. How could you plan, construct,

or finance a new apartment complex or shopping center if you couldn't calculate the return on investment, because you couldn't determine the tax consequences? Business growth would stall in that kind of uncertainty.

And economic uncertainty is no friend to families. The scheme to abolish the Tax Code could threaten nearly every American family's best laid plans for the future. For example, mortgage rates are low now. People are refinancing their mortgages all the time. This has been a wonderful thing for America. What would happen to family behavior with regard to homeownership if people thought the home mortgage deduction might disappear? Would students be as serious about going to college if they thought the HOPE scholarships and the other tax credits and interest deductions wouldn't be there? Would families think twice about how much they were going to give to their church or their synagogue or their favorite charity if they thought there would be no tax deduction for it?

We were just talking about the Social Security reform and how no matter how we reform Social Security, people have to save more for their retirement. Will young families who have a hard enough time paying their bills really be setting aside money for their retirement if they think the tax incentives or pensions or 401(k)'s and IRA's are about to evaporate? In other words, I just think it's wrong to shut down the old tax system and tell people it's going to be shut down by a date certain without saying, at the same time, what is going to be in its place.

None of us would say that no one on Earth couldn't devise a better tax system than we have. There may be better options. But I think before we say we're going to get rid of the one we have on a date certain, we need to know what we're going to replace it with. And I would implore you, if you agree with me, to make that case to your Member of Congress without regard to party.

Again, I don't see this as particularly a partisan issue. I just think it sounds great. I will vote for a bill to get rid of this cursed Tax Code. Thank you very much. *[Laughter]* It's almost irresistible, you know, but so was the siren's song. We must continue to have predictability in the investment climate. We

must continue to have predictability when it comes to savings. We must continue to have a framework, which will keep us doing what we've been doing for the last 5 years.

And that means, by the way, it means we have to continue to be open to changes in the tax law and in the way the IRS operates, and in all these systematic things that we have to continue to modernize. Of course, we must. But we mustn't buy a pig in a poke. We have to continue to proceed with discipline. Scrapping the home mortgage deductions, scrapping other middle class tax cuts without presenting a clear alternative is simply reckless for the economy, reckless for businesses, reckless for families' budgets. I will not permit it if I can stop it. But it shouldn't pass in the first place, and I hope you will help us on that.

Now, again I say, Congress should pass the IRS reforms that are before it. It should pass further tax cuts. But we should balance the budget, do nothing with the surplus until we have saved Social Security, not abolish the Tax Code until we know what we're going to replace it with.

We're going to change around here. This system has proved that we are capable of change. No one should stand in the way of constructive change, but we should stay with the plan that we know works. You look at where we are today in your business compared to where we were 5 years ago. Look at where we are today with the people that you work to serve compared to where we were 5 years ago. Imagine where you want to be 10 years from now. Imagine what you want the future to look like for your children and your grandchildren, to do those things, which will build that future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in the Columbia Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Marc Smith, president, Paul Reid, executive vice president, and Michael Ferrel, senior staff vice president/ legislative counsel, Mortgage Bankers Association of America; and Mary Ellen Withrow, Treasurer of the United States.

## **Proclamation 7071—Women's History Month, 1998**

*March 2, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

The Preamble to the Constitution begins, "We, the people." Yet that phrase, inspiring as it is, has not always included all Americans. Women's history in America has been the story of the struggle of women of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to be included in that simple but powerful statement. It is the story as well of how, in striving to reach their own great potential, women have strengthened and enriched our Nation.

In every era of American history, women have braved enormous challenges to change our world for the better. Women of faith in the early 17th century dared a dangerous journey and the unknown wilderness to seek freedom of conscience in a new land. As our Nation struggled for independence and to establish a new, more enlightened form of government, women like Esther DeBerdt Reed and Sarah Franklin Bache supplied food, clothes, and funds for Washington's soldiers. Freedom fighters like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman led hundreds of enslaved men and women to liberty through the Underground Railroad, and social reformers like Gertrude Bonnin advanced the human rights of American Indians. Suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Luisa Capetillo challenged the conventions of their times and sought to secure for women one of the most basic rights within our democracy.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the women's rights movement in America and its immeasurable contributions to our Nation's promise of justice and equality for all. The visionary women and men who gathered in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848 for the first Women's Rights Convention in history gave voice so powerfully to women's aspirations for inclusion and empowerment that their vision continues to shape our world today.

Once disenfranchised, American women now serve at the highest levels of govern-

ment, as Justices of the Supreme Court and in increasing numbers in the Cabinet and the United States Congress. Once denied the resources and opportunities to play organized sports, American women made sporting history this year by winning the first-ever Olympic Gold Medal in women's ice hockey. Women are cracking the glass ceilings of corporate management to lead some of our country's most prominent businesses. As parents and partners, entrepreneurs and artists, politicians and scientists, women are helping to build an America in which all citizens, regardless of gender, are free to live out their dreams.

Thanks to the efforts of women leaders, little girls across America today know far fewer limits than did their mothers and grandmothers. But there still remains work to be done to create a more just America, and we must rededicate ourselves to ending the discrimination that women still face. We must continue our efforts to help women succeed at work and at home, to be free from violent crime, and to enjoy quality health care. In doing so, we will confirm our conviction that "We, the people" includes us all.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1998 as Women's History Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to remember throughout the year the many voices and stories of courageous women who have made our Nation strong.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:31 a.m., March 3, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 4.

**Statement on the United Nations  
Security Council Vote on Iraq**

*March 2, 1998*

Tonight's unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council sends the clearest possible message: Iraq must make good on its commitment to give the international weapons inspectors immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any suspect site, any place, any time. All of the members of the Council agree that failure to do so will result in the severest consequences for Iraq.

In the days and weeks ahead, the inspectors will renew their mission to find and destroy Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capacity and the missiles to deliver them. Iraq now has the responsibility to turn the commitment it has made into full compliance.

**Remarks at the John F. Kennedy  
Presidential Library Foundation  
Dinner**

*March 2, 1998*

Thank you very much, Senator, Vicki, Caroline and Ed, other members of the Kennedy family, Paul Kirk. And I say a special word of thanks to all of you who have made this evening possible. I thank Senator Jeffords and Senator Thurmond and Senator Hatch for being here tonight to restrain the partisan impulses that might otherwise overtake Senator Kennedy and me. *[Laughter]* I thank Yo Yo Ma and Jill and all the other musicians who have come here. Mr. Secretary General, thank you for the wonderful job you do here at the OAS.

I think I should begin by saying that for me this is not an obligation, it is an honor, not only because like every other member of my generation I was inspired by President Kennedy but because Hillary and Chelsea and I have been profoundly moved by the uncommon kindnesses of this family to ours.

In 1991 I had an event in New York when no one in New York knew my name, and I looked up and John Kennedy was there. I think it would be fair to say that his name recognition was 5 times higher than mine among all in attendance. *[Laughter]* Early in

1992 Mrs. Kennedy came to an event for me and later went out of her way to be helpful and kind to Hillary and to Chelsea in ways that are difficult to relate but impossible to overestimate.

The other day we were spending a weekend in Camp David, and I went out with a couple of Members of Congress, cavorting around in the lousy weather. Hillary stayed home with her friends and watched Jackie Kennedy's White House special, marveling again about the incredible work that was done to preserve America's house by Mrs. Kennedy.

And I do believe that, no matter who writes the history books, when people look back on this century, they will say that Edward Kennedy was one of the ablest and most productive, most compassionate, and most effective men who served in the United States Senate in the entire history of the country.

The JFK Library and its museum are national treasures, but I would like to talk about three things that are to some extent both more intangible and more tangible in the legacy of President Kennedy that will be enshrined forever if all of us do our job and keep this great enterprise going.

First, the spirit of citizen service, most clearly embodied in the Peace Corps. President Kennedy said that he wanted to speak to those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery. We pledged to them our best efforts to help them help themselves. Five weeks later, 37 years ago yesterday, the Peace Corps was born. In 3 weeks, when I travel to Africa, my first stop will be Ghana, the first place President Kennedy's Peace Corps volunteers went to serve. Now they have gone, over the years, to 132 nations.

Tomorrow America will celebrate these accomplishments during the first ever Peace Corps Day, when thousands of former Peace Corps volunteers, including Secretary Shalala, who was a volunteer in Iran, and I might add has volunteered to go back if it will help our new efforts. *[Laughter]* Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers have agreed to talk with students around our country about their life-changing experiences.



The JFK Library also has a Library Corps, perhaps not as well known as the building itself, started by this foundation, which is inspiring young people in Roxbury, Dorchester, South Boston to work after school on community service projects.

Inspired by President Kennedy's example, I have done what I could to advance the cause of citizen service. I just asked for the largest funding increase for the Peace Corps in history, in the hope that we can put 10,000 volunteers overseas by the turn of the century.

Our national service project, AmeriCorps, has already given 100,000 young people a chance to earn some money for college while they serve in their communities. One of my happiest days as President was when we walked up the South Lawn of the White House with all the first group of young people, and I met Senator Kennedy, and we signed the bill.

Soon, tens of thousands of those young people will be working with elementary school students, to teach them to read, and middle school students, promising to stay with them throughout their careers to make sure they get a chance to go to college, too.

So we thank President Kennedy and all of you for the spirit of citizen service.

The second thing that I would like to say in appreciation to the legacy of President Kennedy is that he did a lot to remind us all that we owe it to ourselves, to our children, and to our future to cherish and proliferate exposure to the arts. The First Lady and I have tried to do that in our celebration of the millennium. We have been having these Millennium Evenings. We had the great Harvard historian Bernard Bailyn the other night, and this Friday night we will have the brilliant cosmologist Stephen Hawking. A week from tonight we will also highlight four vernacular dances that have entered our unique dance: tap, Lindy-hopping, jazz, and—so help me, I didn't organize this—Irish step dancing. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Yo Yo Ma for the work that he has done to try to bring the arts, and music in particular, to so many Americans who might otherwise have never had a first-hand experience with what can lead us all

to a higher level of understanding and enjoyment of life.

Finally, and most personally, I am here because President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, their generation, made me admire and believe in public service and made me understand that it could be fun but that it also carried with it certain responsibilities. They made me believe that it was not a bad thing but a noble thing to want to exercise power but only if it were exercised for some larger purpose. There are many people in this room tonight who could be standing here making exactly the same statement.

Just before I came over here, I finished a magnificent new biography of Theodore Roosevelt by H.W. Brands called "The Last Romantic." It's a terrific book, and it's only 820 pages long. *[Laughter]* But I was thinking—because President Roosevelt died right after the close of the First World War, I was thinking about the whole sweep of the century that President Kennedy's life marked and that his service marked in such a profound way.

This century we are about to leave was dominated by the consequences of the industrial revolution, the growth of very big organizations—economic organizations, governmental organizations—and the attendant wealth and power and possibility and threat that revolution spawned. So that for most of this century, Americans in positions of responsibility and ordinary American citizens have both had an incredible opportunity to find wealth and personal fulfillment and greater expression of freedom because of the organized development of this time. But they have also had an enormous responsibility to stand up against the new horrors that vast organized power presented to them, whether in greed or bigotry or outright totalitarian oppression.

John Kennedy made us believe that in public service you could fight for the things that ought to be fought for; you could fight against the things that ought to be fought against; and that the sole purpose of power, fleeting though it is, was to be applied to the best of your God-given ability to those worthy goals.

Now, we're about to enter a new century with problems and opportunities unparalleled in history, speeding along at a pace and with a complexity that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. There is a lot of good in the fact that the knowledge of the world is now doubling—sheer facts are doubling every 5 years. We see in the human genome project miraculous health discoveries being made almost weekly now.

But we also know that in this new world, where the Internet is exploding and 65,000 new sites are being added every hour of every day, that there will be new ways that people who are organized for the abuse of their power will present new threats, perhaps terrorists or organized criminals or narcotraffickers, perhaps in the forms of chemical or biological or small-scale nuclear weapons, perhaps unwise leaders being too greedy in the short run, forcing poor people off their land into the teeming cities of poor countries, devastating the environment, leading to the spread of disease.

So we will now live in a new area where humankind will have all kinds of new possibilities for good and all manner of new things that need to be fought against. I hope that the children of this age will find a way to believe in America the way President Kennedy helped me to believe in America and to believe that the political process leaves the ultimate power in the people and gives its elected Representatives a precious chance just to bring out the good and stand against the bad. It is the eternal human obligation. He made it seem fun and noble and good. The least we can do is to keep the torch burning.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the Hall of the Americas at the Organization of American States. In his remarks, he referred to Victoria Kennedy, wife of Senator Edward Kennedy; Caroline Kennedy and her husband, Edward Schlossberg; John F. Kennedy, Jr.; Paul Kirk, chair, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Foundation Dinner; and Secretary General César Gaviria of the Organization of American States.

## **Remarks on Signing a Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving**

*March 3, 1998*

**The President.** Thank you, Brenda, and I thank the other members of the Frazier family and the friends who are here in support of you. Attorney General Reno, Senator Lautenberg, Congresswoman Lowey, Senator DeWine, Chief Flynn, thank you for your work and your support. I thank Secretary Slater, Senator Dorgan, Senator Hollings, Senator Moseley-Braun, and Congressman McGovern for their presence and their support. And I thank the Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Students Against Destructive Decisions, the organizations for highway safety, all of you who are here in this noble endeavor.

Let me say that after hearing Brenda Frazier's story there is very little that needs to be said. After seeing the photograph of Ashley, there is very little that needs to be seen. Every parent in this country, every single one, who has ever put his or her child in a car with someone else to go off to some destination, has felt that sense of loss of control, that fear that something might happen. Every parent of a teenager has spent some moment on every weekend of the teenager's life, when the teenager was out, wondering, hoping, and praying that nothing would ever happen.

To be reminded that these things do happen should be all the reminder any Member of Congress or any American ever needs. We've heard Brenda's story, but there is hardly a family or community in America that hasn't been touched by drunk driving. Senator Dorgan, we thank you especially for being here today, because you lost your mother, Dorothy, to a drunk driver. And we know that this is a national problem. Senator DeWine reminded us that in 1984 President Reagan signed into law the legislation to help make 21 the national drinking age. Senator Lautenberg fought for that law in Congress because he knew that most of all our young people were threatened.

Eleven years later, I was proud to sign into law the zero tolerance legislation that is helping to make it illegal for a person under 21 to drive in any State after drinking any measurable amount of alcohol, no matter what the legal limit is. I say to you, if we win this battle and you want to come back for a lower limit, I'll be glad to stand here with you under those circumstances as well. The "Safe and Sober Streets Act" takes the next step to lower the legal limit to .08 in every State. When Congress passes it I'll sign it, and we'll work hard to pass it.

Today there is something else I'd like to do. I am instructing Secretary Slater to report back to me in 45 days with a plan to make .08 the legal limit on all Federal property, from National Parks to military bases, so that the United States can lead the way in making .08 the law of the land all over the land.

Lowering the legal limit to .08 will not prevent adults from enjoying alcoholic beverages. But lowering the limit will make responsible Americans take even greater care when they drink alcohol in any amounts if they intend to drive.

To people who disregard the lethal threat they pose when they drink and drive, lowering the legal limit will send a strong message that our Nation will not tolerate irresponsible acts that endanger our children and our Nation. We will, meanwhile, continue to do all we can to protect our young people from harm, fighting to keep drugs and guns and alcohol out of our schools and our children's lives, fighting to shield them from the deadly harm of illegal exposure and use of tobacco.

With the steps we take today, we will build on that progress to help to ensure that the lives of Ashley Frazier, Dorothy Dorgan, and thousands of others cut short by drunk driving will not have been lost in vain.

Now, in a few moments I want to ask Ashley's classmates who are here, members of my Cabinet, and the Members of Congress who are here to join me as I sign the Presidential directive on Federal property. But before I do, if you will indulge me, because of the action of the United Nations Security Council with regard to Iraq and because this is the only chance I have to appear before the press and therefore the American people today, I would like to make a brief statement.

The unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council last night sends a clear message. Iraq must fulfill without obstruction or delay its commitment to open all of the nation to the international weapons inspectors—anyplace, anytime, without any conditions, deadlines, or excuses.

All the members of the Security Council agree that failure to do so will result in severest consequences. The Government of Iraq should be under no illusion. The meaning of "severest consequences" is clear. It provides authority to act if Iraq does not turn the commitment it has now made into compliance.

As the Secretary-General told the Security Council yesterday, Iraq's complete fulfillment of these obligations is the one and only aim of the agreement. No promise of peace and no policy of patience can be without its limits. Iraq's words must be matched by deeds. The world is watching.

Now, I would like to ask Ashley's classmates, the members of the Cabinet, and the Members of Congress, as well as Chief Flynn, would you all join us up here now, and Brenda, please.

*[At this point, the President signed the memorandum on standards to prevent drinking and driving.]*

**The President.** Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brenda Frazier, mother of Ashley Frazier, who was killed by a drunk driver; Edward Flynn, chief of police, Arlington County, VA; and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

## **Memorandum on Standards To Prevent Drinking and Driving**

*March 3, 1998*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation*

*Subject: Standards to Prevent Drinking and Driving*

We have made progress in improving highway safety through a variety of innovative and aggressive initiatives, including our "Buckle Up America" campaign to increase safety

belt usage and improve child passenger safety, and the formation of a ground-breaking public-private partnership on airbags. We have also taken important steps to reduce the deaths and injuries brought about by alcohol use and driving. In November 1995, I signed into law legislation to help ensure that States adopt "Zero Alcohol Tolerance" laws by October 1998 for young drivers. To date, 46 States and the District of Columbia have enacted such laws.

However, drunk driving remains a serious highway safety problem. Over 40 percent of all motor vehicle deaths in 1996—17,126—were alcohol-related, and nearly 3,000 of these fatalities were young people under the age of 21. Moreover, alcohol-related automobile accidents cost our society \$45 billion every year, not including the pain and suffering endured by the victims.

We must do more to prevent the many tragic and unnecessary alcohol-related deaths and injuries that occur on our Nation's roads. That is why my Administration has called on the Congress to pass legislation helping to ensure that a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 becomes the national legal limit. Research shows that, at a BAC level of .08, drivers are impaired with regard to critical driving tasks such as braking, steering, lane changing, and exercising good judgment. The risk of being involved in a crash increases substantially when drivers have a BAC level of .08 or above. In fact, the relative risk of a driver being killed in a single-vehicle crash at .08 BAC has been estimated to be at least 11 times higher than it is for drivers who have no alcohol in their system. Yet 33 States and the District of Columbia continue to use .10 BAC as the legal limit. It is estimated that if all States were to lower their limits to .08 BAC, there would be 600 fewer alcohol-related traffic deaths every year.

I hope the Congress will enact legislation as soon as possible to help to ensure State passage of .08 BAC laws. Even before the Congress acts, however, we can take action to promote .08 BAC as the appropriate standard across the country, including on Federal property.

I therefore direct you, working with appropriate Federal agencies, the Congress, the States, safety groups, and other concerned

Americans, to report back to me within 45 days with a plan to promote the adoption of a .08 BAC legal limit. Among other things, the plan should consider:

- (1) setting a .08 BAC standard on Federal property, including in national parks and on Department of Defense installations, and ensuring strong enforcement and publicity of this standard;
- (2) encouraging tribal governments to adopt, enforce, and publicize a .08 BAC standard on highways in Indian Country that are subject to their jurisdiction; and
- (3) developing an educational campaign to help the public understand the risks associated with combining alcohol consumption and driving.

**William J. Clinton**

### **Statement on the Decision of Representative Esteban Torres Not To Seek Reelection**

*March 3, 1998*

Throughout his distinguished career in the United States Congress, Representative Esteban Torres has dedicated himself to bettering the lives of his constituents and Hispanic-Americans across the country. Representative Torres has shown true leadership in the area of civil rights and has stood steadfast in an effort to bring our country together amid all of our diversity to build a stronger community.

Congressman Torres has led efforts to provide people with the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. He has set the standard for excellence in public service and his retirement after over 15 years will be a loss felt across the country.

### **Statement on Senate Foreign Relations Committee Support for NATO Enlargement**

*March 3, 1998*

I welcome today's strong endorsement by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech

Republic to NATO. By adding these countries as our newest allies, we will make NATO stronger, Europe more stable, and America more secure.

The United States has led the way in building an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe. I hope we will be among the first to ratify NATO's historic enlargement. I look forward to the full Senate vote on this issue in the weeks ahead.

**Memorandum on Conducting  
"Conversations With America" To  
Further Improve Customer Service**  
*March 3, 1998*

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive  
Departments and Agencies*

*Subject:* Conducting "Conversations with America" to Further Improve Customer Service

This Administration has made significant progress toward reinventing Government to improve customer service since I issued Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," on September 11, 1993, followed by my memorandum of March 22, 1995, "Improving Customer Service." For the first time, the Federal Government's customers have been asked what they want and have been told that they have a right to expect first-class service. Now they can see the results achieved against the customer service standards that have been set in place.

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the establishment of my Administration's reinventing Government initiative, it is time to increase efforts to engage customers in conversations about further improving Government service. This initiative—"Conversations with America"—will enable your agency to discover what is most important to its customers and what the Federal Government can do to meet their expectations. As your agency learns what Americans care about, use this information to provide service that will equal the best in business and serve as a model for others.

To carry out this effort and assure that Government works better and gets results Americans care about, I am now directing the additional steps set forth below.

**Actions.** The agencies covered by Executive Order 12862 are directed as follows:

1. Agencies shall create activities and programs, continuing throughout the year, that will engage customers in a discussion about how to improve Government service by determining the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services.

2. By no later than March 16, 1998, agencies shall designate a person within the agency to serve as the primary liaison to coordinate information and programs dealing with the "Conversations with America" initiative. Agencies shall then provide the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) with their agency's primary liaison and a list of events the agency will conduct to engage Americans in conversations about improving Government service. This monthly report should provide the date and a brief description of each event.

3. Agencies shall engage the largest number of customers possible in these conversations. The use of all forms of media is encouraged to reach the largest possible audience. Particular emphasis should be placed on conducting these conversations in the areas where agency customers live and work.

4. In 1998, agencies shall put in place a process to address customer complaints. Agency customers should be provided opportunities for finding solutions to problems, such as "Problem Solving Days" and other venues. Agencies shall track and analyze the data they receive and use it to change processes that do not serve customers well. As your agency identifies individual problems, work to solve them quickly and systemically.

5. Agencies shall use the information from "Conversations with America" and continue to track customer service measurements, then take necessary actions to change or improve how the agency operates, as appropriate. Integrate what your agency learns from its customers with your agency's strategic plans, operating plans, and performance measures required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, reporting on financial and program performance under the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, and the Government Management Reform Act of 1994.

6. As required by my memorandum on improving customer service of March 22, 1995, each agency shall, on at least an annual basis, report on the customer service results they have achieved in terms readily understood by individual customers. Agencies shall continue actions required by Executive Order 12862 as well, including, but not limited to surveying employees and conducting benchmarking studies to assure we achieve customer service for the American people that is equal to the best in business.

**Independent Agencies.** Independent agencies are requested to adhere to this directive.

**Judicial Review.** This directive is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

**William J. Clinton**

### **Message to the Congress Transmitting the 1998 National Drug Control Strategy**

*March 3, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

On behalf of the American people, I am pleased to transmit the *1998 National Drug Control Strategy* to the Congress. The *1998 Strategy* reaffirms our bipartisan, enduring commitment to reduce drug use and its destructive consequences.

This year's *Strategy* builds upon the 1997 *Strategy* and is designed to reduce drug use and availability in America in half over the next 10 years—a historic new low. This plan has been developed under the leadership of General Barry McCaffrey, Director of National Drug Control Policy, in close consultation with the Congress, the more than 50 Federal agencies and departments involved in the fight against drugs, the dedicated men and women of law enforcement, and with stakeholders—mayors, doctors, clergy, civic leaders, parents, and young people—drawn from all segments of our society.

I am also proud to report that we have made real and substantial progress in carry-

ing out the goals of the 1997 *Strategy*. Working with the Congress, we have begun the National Anti-Drug Youth Media Campaign. Now when our children turn on the television, surf the “net,” or listen to the radio, they can learn the plain truth about drugs: they are wrong, they put your future at risk, and they can kill you. I thank you for your vital support in bringing this important message to America's young people.

Together, we enacted into law the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, which will help build and strengthen 14,000 community anti-drug coalitions and brought together civic groups—ranging from the Elks to the Girl Scouts and representing over 55 million Americans—to form a Civic Alliance, targeting youth drug use. By mobilizing people and empowering communities, we are defeating drugs through a child-by-child, street-by-street, and neighborhood-by-neighborhood approach.

We have also helped make our streets and communities safer by strengthening law enforcement. Through my Administration's Community Oriented Police (COPs) program, we are helping but 100,000 more police officers in towns and cities across the Nation. We are taking deadly assault weapons out of the hands of drug dealers and gangs, making our streets safer for our families. We have taken steps to rid our prisons of drugs, as well as to break the vicious cycle of drugs and crime. These efforts are making a difference: violent crime in America has dropped dramatically for 5 years in a row.

Over the last year, the United States and Mexico reached agreement on a mutual *Threat Assessment* that defines the scope of the common threat we face; and, an *Alliance* that commits our great nations to defeating that threat. Soon, we will sign a bilateral *Strategy* that commits both nations to specific actions and performance benchmarks. Our work to enhance cooperation within the hemisphere and worldwide is already showing results. For example, Peruvian coca production has declined by roughly 40 percent over the last 2 years. In 1997, Mexican drug eradication rates reached record levels, and seizures increased nearly 50 percent over 1996.

We are making a difference. Drug use in America has declined by 50 percent over the last decade. For the first time in 6 years, studies show that youth drug use is beginning to stabilize, and in some respects is even declining. And indications are that the meth-amphetamine and crack cocaine epidemics, which in recent years were sweeping the Nation, have begun to recede.

However, we must not confuse progress with ultimate success. Although youth drug use has started to decline, it remains unacceptably high.

More than ever, we must recommit ourselves to give parents the tools and support they need to teach children that drugs are dangerous and wrong. That is why we must improve the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, and other after school initiatives that help keep our kids in school, off drugs, and out of trouble. We must hire 1,000 new border patrol agents and close the door on drugs at our borders. We must redouble our efforts with other nations to take the profits out of drug dealing and trafficking and break the sources of supply. And we must enact comprehensive bipartisan tobacco legislation that reduces youth smoking. These and other efforts are central elements of the *1998 National Drug Control Strategy*.

With the help of the American public, and the ongoing support of the Congress, we can achieve these goals. In submitting this plan to you, I ask for your continued partnership in defeating drugs in America. Our children and this Nation deserve no less.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 3, 1998.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting the Report of the  
Department of Housing and Urban  
Development**

*March 3, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 3536, I transmit herewith the 32nd Annual Report of the Department of Housing and

Urban Development, which covers calendar year 1996.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 3, 1998.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting the Report of the  
Interagency Arctic Research Policy  
Committee**

*March 3, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 108(b) of Public Law 98-373 (15 U.S.C. 4107(b)), I transmit herewith the Seventh Biennial Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (February 1, 1996 to January 31, 1998).

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 3, 1998.

**Remarks at the 75th Anniversary  
Celebration of Time Magazine in  
New York City**

*March 3, 1998*

Thank you very much. Thank you Walter, Jerry Levin, and all the people at Time. Tonight, Time has paid tribute to the time it not only observed but helped to create. The stunning years your founder, Henry Luce, so unforgettably called, the American Century.

To me, one man above all others is the personification of our American Century: Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Now, that choice might have pained Henry Luce—[laughter]—but surely he would not be surprised. The story of this century we're about to leave is really many stories: the ascendance of science and technology, the rise of big Government and mass media, the movements for equality for women and racial minorities, the dynamic growth and disruptive force of the industrial age.

But when our children's children look back, they will see that above all else, the story of the 20th century is the story of the triumph of freedom. Freedom: the victory of

democracy over totalitarianism, of free enterprise over state socialism, of tolerance over bigotry and ignorance. The advance of freedom has made this the American Century, for in this century America has made freedom ring. The embodiment of the triumph, the driving force behind it, was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Today, with the happy outcome known to all, it is tempting to look back and say the victory was assured, inevitable. But it wasn't.

In the face of the 20th century's greatest crisis, decisively, irrevocably, President Roosevelt committed America to freedom's fight. Because of that commitment and its embrace by every American leader since, today we can say, for the very first time in all of human history, a majority of the world's people live under governments of their own choosing in freedom.

Winston Churchill said that Franklin Roosevelt's life was one of the commanding events in human history. He was born to privilege, but he understood the aspirations of farmers and factory workers and forgotten Americans. My grandfather came from a little town of about 50 people. He had a fourth grade education. He believed that Franklin Roosevelt was his friend, a man who cared about him and his family and his child's future. Polio put him in a wheelchair, but he lifted our troubled Nation to its feet and he got us moving again.

He was a patrician who happily addressed the Daughters of the American Revolution as, "my fellow immigrants." He was a master politician, a magnificent Commander in Chief. Yes, his life had its fair share of disappointments and failures, but they never broke his spirit or his faith in God or his people. Because he always rose to the occasion, so did we. FDR was guided not by the iron dictates of ideology but by the pragmatism by what he called bold persistent experimentation. "If one thing doesn't work," he said, "try another thing, but above all, try something." It drove his critics crazy, but it worked.

He brought joy and nobility to public service as he completed the mission of his kinsman, Theodore Roosevelt, forging a progressive Government for the industrial age, taming the savage cycle of boom and bust,

giving our citizens the economic security and the skills they needed to build the great American middle class.

In our century's struggle for freedom, President Roosevelt won two great victories. By confronting the gravest threat capitalism had ever faced, the Great Depression, he strengthened economic liberty for all time, teaching us that free markets require effective Government, one in which individual initiative and the call of community are not at odds, but instead are woven together in one seamless social fabric.

By confronting and defeating the gravest threat to personal and political liberty the world has ever faced, he forever committed America to the frontlines of the struggle for freedom. He taught us that even the expanses of two great oceans could not shield America from danger or absolve America from responsibility. He taught us that our destiny, forever, is linked to the destiny of the world, that our freedom requires us to support freedom for all others, that humanity's cause must be America's cause.

Now we know what came of Roosevelt and his generation's rendezvous with destiny. What will come of ours? To this generation of the millennium, in President Roosevelt's words, "much has been given and much is asked." When Roosevelt ran for President in 1932, he said new times demand new responses from Government. He saved capitalism from its own excesses, so it could again be a force for progress and freedom. Now we work to modernize Government, saving it from its excess of debt, so that again it is a force for progress and freedom in a new era.

As Roosevelt gave Americans security in the industrial age, now we work to give Americans opportunity in the information age. As Roosevelt asked us to meet the crushing burden of the Depression with bold persistent experimentation, now we must bring the same attitude to the challenges and unrivaled opportunities of this era to our schools, our streets, our poorest neighborhoods, to the fight against disease, the exploration of space, the preservation of the environment.

As Roosevelt established that security and opportunity for ordinary Americans required



our leadership and cooperation with like-minded people throughout the world, now we must commit ourselves to the common struggle against new threats to the security and prosperity of ordinary people everywhere. For even more than in President Roosevelt's time, our prospects are bound to the world's progress. Like FDR, we look around us and see a world that is not yet fully free. The advance of democracy has been steady, but it isn't irreversible.

For our generation, what does freedom mean? Well, at least the long, delayed achievement of President Roosevelt's dream of a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the first time in history. What does freedom from fear mean? Well, at least, freedom for our children from the worry of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. What does freedom from fear or freedom from want mean? Well, at least, for the world, a fair chance for people in every land to develop their minds, find reward in honest labor, and raise their children in peace according to the dictates of their conscience.

America must work to secure this kind of freedom with our allies and friends whenever possible, alone if absolutely necessary. We work today through the United Nations, which FDR helped to create and which he named. I salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan tonight for what he has done. Bearing an unequivocal message from the international community, backed by the credible threat of force, the Secretary-General obtained Iraq's commitment to honor United Nations resolutions on weapons inspection. Now the Security Council clearly and unanimously has supported the agreement. Iraq must match its words and its deeds, its commitment with compliance.

In the tradition of FDR, America and its partners must make sure that happens. And in the tradition of FDR, America must support the United Nations and other institutions for global security and prosperity, and that means we ought to pay our fair share.

In the darkest hours of the Second World War, Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed, "We have faith that future generations will know that here in the middle of the 20th century, there came a time when men of good will found a way to unite and produce and fight to destroy the forces of ignorance and intolerance and slavery and war."

More than any other 20th century American, Franklin Roosevelt fulfilled the mandate of America's Founders. When everything was on the line, he pledged our lives, our fortunes, our sacred honor to the preservation of liberty, the pursuit of happiness, the creation of a more perfect Union. The next century is now barely 700 days away. It will be many things new: a time of stunning leaps of science; a century of dizzying technology; a digital century; an era in which the very face of our Nation will change.

Yet in all the newness, what is required of us still is to follow President Roosevelt's lead, to strengthen the bonds of our Union, widen the circle of opportunity, and deepen the reach of freedom. That is the tribute we ought to pay to him. God willing, we will. And if we do, we will make the 21st century the next American Century, and a Happy Warrior will be smiling down on us.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:59 p.m. at Radio City Music Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Walter Isaacson, managing editor, *Time* magazine; and Gerald Levin, chief executive officer, Time/Warner.

**Memorandum on President's  
Community Empowerment Board**

*March 3, 1998*

*Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Education, the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Administrator of the General Services Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy*

**Subject: President's Community Empowerment Board**

In order to advance the efforts of the President's Community Empowerment Board (CEB) and to facilitate interagency coordination and cooperation, I hereby order the following:

The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality will become members of the CEB.

With these additional members, I am confident that we will be able to better provide distressed communities with a single Federal

forum dedicated to helping them address their economic and community needs.

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

**Message to the Congress Reporting  
on Bosnia-Herzegovina**

*March 3, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I hereby certify that the continued presence of U.S. armed forces, after June 30, 1998, in Bosnia and Herzegovina is required in order to meet the national security interests of the United States, and that it is the policy of the United States that U.S. armed forces will not serve as, or be used as, civil police in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This certification is presented pursuant to section 1203 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, Public Law 105-85, and section 8132 of the National Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal year 1998, Public Law 105-56. The information required under these sections is in the report that accompanies this certification. The supplemental appropriations request required under these sections is being forwarded under separate cover.

America has major national interests in peace in Bosnia. We have learned from hard experience in this turbulent century that America's security and Europe's stability are intimately linked. The Bosnian war saw the worst fighting—and the most profound humanitarian disaster—on that continent since the end of the Second World War. The conflict could easily have spread through the region, endangering old Allies and new democracies alike. A larger conflict would have cast doubt on the viability of the NATO alliance itself and crippled prospects for our larger goal of a democratic, undivided, and peaceful Europe.

The Dayton framework is the key to changing the conditions that made Bosnia a fuse in a regional powder keg. It is decisively in American interests to see Dayton implemented as rapidly as feasible, so that peace becomes self-sustaining. U.S. leadership is as

essential to sustaining progress as it has been to ending the war and laying the foundation for peace.

I expect the size of the overall NATO force in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain similar to that of the current SFOR. However, the U.S. contribution would decline by about 20 percent, as our Allies and partners continue to shoulder an increasing share of the burden.

Although I do not propose a fixed end-date for this presence, it is by no means open-ended. Instead, the goal of the military presence is to establish the conditions under which Dayton implementation can continue without the support of a major NATO-led military force. To achieve this goal, we have established concrete and achievable benchmarks, such as the reform of police and media, the elimination of illegal pre-Dayton institutions, the conduct of elections according to democratic norms, elimination of cross-entity barriers to commerce, and a framework for the phased and orderly return of refugees. NATO and U.S. forces will be reduced progressively as achievement of these benchmarks improves conditions, enabling the international community to rely largely on traditional diplomacy, international civil personnel, economic incentives and disincentives, confidence-building measures, and negotiation to continue implementing the Dayton Accords over the longer term.

In fact, great strides already have been made towards fulfilling these aims, especially in the last ten months since the United States re-energized the Dayton process. Since Dayton, a stable military environment has been created; over 300,000 troops returned to civilian life and 6,600 heavy weapons have been destroyed. Public security is improving through the restructuring, retraining and reintegration of local police. Democratic elections have been held at all levels of government and hard-line nationalists—especially in the Republika Srpska—are increasingly marginalized. Independent media and political pluralism are expanding. Over 400,000 refugees and displaced persons have returned home—110,000 in 1997. One third of the publicly-indicted war criminals have been taken into custody.

Progress has been particularly dramatic since the installation of a pro-Dayton, pro-democracy Government in Republika Srpska in December. Already, the capital of Republika Srpska has been moved from Pale to Banja Luka; media are being restructured along democratic lines; civil police are generally cooperating with the reform process; war criminals are surrendering; and Republika Srpska is working directly with counterparts in the Federation to prepare key cities in both entities for major returns of refugees and displaced persons.

At the same time, long-standing obstacles to inter-entity cooperation also are being broken down: a common flag now flies over Bosnian institutions, a common currency is being printed, a common automobile license plate is being manufactured, and mail is being delivered and trains are running across the inter-entity boundary line.

Although progress has been tangible, many of these achievements still are reversible and a robust international military presence still is required at the present time to sustain the progress. I am convinced that the NATO-led force—and U.S. participation in it—can be progressively reduced as conditions continue to improve, until the implementation process is capable of sustaining itself without a major international military presence.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 3, 1998.

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

## **Remarks Supporting Food Safety Legislation**

*March 4, 1998*

**The President.** Thank you very much for the terrific remarks. Let me—first I want to move Senator Mikulski's box. [*Laughter*]

**Senator Barbara Mikulski.** I don't want it to be a public health hazard. [*Laughter*]

**The President.** Put it on some of those little germs. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Senator Mikulski, Senator Kennedy, Congresswoman Eshoo, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, and Congressman Pallone, thank you, sir. I'd also like to thank Secretary Shalala, Secretary Glickman, and Ambassador Barshefsky for the work they have done, and the Vice President for the work he has done on this issue over the last, now, more than 5 years.

Last night I went to New York to the celebration of Time magazine's 75th anniversary, and a number of us were asked to do portraits of heroic figures of the 20th century. I talked last night about Franklin Roosevelt, and we're in the Roosevelt Room here. But today I'm thinking more of Theodore Roosevelt, for it was Theodore Roosevelt at the beginning of this century who made an unprecedented national commitment for that time to protect America's families from unsafe food.

It was at the dawn of the industrial age, when Americans were moving from farm to city, for the first time buying their food from other people instead of growing it themselves. Roosevelt ensured that for that time the rules we had made our food as safe as we could make it. President Roosevelt set a high standard nearly, now, a century ago. It has been a personal commitment of mine and of this administration to update that standard for the 21st century. As the world changes, new challenges arise, it takes new methods to do the old job right.

The Vice President has told you about some things our administration has done to modernize food safety, to keep our food supply the safest in the world. I was literally stunned when I came here to find out that we were inspecting meat in the United States in the same way we had inspected it since 1910, and in the same way that dogs inspect it today, by smelling it and touching it. We're doing a little better now. *[Laughter]*

But as has been made painfully apparent today by the remarks of our two Members of Congress and by you, ma'am, there is still a lot we still have to do to meet the challenges to food safety posed by new patterns of trade and commerce in food.

It wasn't long ago that you could walk to the produce section of a grocery store, look around, and find no more than a dozen items

that would be there all year round. Today, thanks to this global food market, it's not uncommon to find up to 400 varieties, almost all of them year around. You can get summer squash in the chill of winter and winter squash in the heat of summer now. And the farmer who grows these vegetables most likely no longer lives down the road from you. He might live across the ocean or on the other side of the world.

It's more important than ever under these circumstances, now that we're getting the benefits of these new patterns, which are manifold, it's more important than ever that the food we eat be inspected and protected, from orchard to fruit basket, from farm to table, wherever the orchard or the farm may be. And when families join us—and millions and millions of Americans are joining us—as they walk through the produce section, we know that none of them should have to worry about where the food comes from or whether it's safe.

Food safety really is part of the basic contract now between the consumers of our country and their Government. Any food that doesn't meet clear and strict standards should not come into the United States. It's that simple.

Last fall, I announced a new initiative to ensure that fruits and vegetables coming from abroad are as safe as those grown here at home and to halt at the border or the dock any food that fails to meet those standards. I directed the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture to report on our progress in improving food safety at home and abroad. This is their report; they've just given it to me before we came in here. It is a good and thorough one. It underscores my belief that while we have done a lot, more must be done, and we need the help of Congress to do more.

The next important step to protect America's families from food-borne illnesses requires Congress to enact the bill introduced by Senator Mikulski, Senator Kennedy, and others in the Senate, by Representatives Eshoo, Pallone, and others in the House. This is not a political issue. It's not a Democratic or a Republican issue. It is simply an issue whose time has come. We are getting all the benefits of global agriculture. We have

to rise to the challenges of the same trends. By giving the FDA the tools and the technology it needs, the legislation will give Americans the extra protection they deserve.

At the beginning of the century, Theodore Roosevelt recognized that new challenges demand new Government, in this case, a Government that demands responsibility from industry and producers, but also provides clearer, stricter standards of safety and the means to enforce them. Our families enjoy the greatest bounty and variety of food in the world. We have to ensure that it will also be the safest food in the world.

The 21st century will be interesting for many reasons. Among them will be the increasing variety of food from all over the world that all kinds of Americans will be able to buy in their neighborhood stores. It will be one more way that people, I hope, will have a more enjoyable life in the next century. It will only happen if the food is safe and people know it's safe, so they're not worried when they shop.

Again, I want to join the Vice President, if I might in closing, in thanking the Senate for passing the bill yesterday to reduce the standard of drunk driving to .08. I think it's very important, it will save hundreds of lives a year. I hope the House will follow suit, and I hope that's an indication that these kind of public safety issues will be high on the agenda of Congress and that the bill that our Members who are here today are pushing so hard will find a speedy and positive reception in the Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

### **Statement on the Death of Fred Friendly**

*March 4, 1998*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened today to learn of the death of Fred Friendly. One of the giants of American journalism, Fred started his career in radio, forming a partnership with Edward R. Murrow on the radio series "Hear It Now," which became the landmark television series "See It Now." To

this day, the programs Fred produced four decades ago rank among the finest journalism of the century, exposing the demagoguery of Joe McCarthy, the poverty of migrant farmers, and so many other social ills.

Fred was always willing to challenge the powerful. He led CBS News at a time when television was just beginning to demonstrate its power to the world. When he left CBS, Fred became a pioneer in public television and public television documentaries. In more recent years, he has served as the conscience of his industry, exploring the ethics of journalism and teaching and training journalists to come. Through his many writings and television productions, he succeeded in his goal: to force the American public to think.

Our prayers today are with Fred's wife, Ruth, and their children.

### **Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Political Status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico**

*March 4, 1998*

I am pleased that the House of Representatives has passed a bill which establishes a process for determining the future political status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The bill does not impose onerous, unworkable, unprecedented, or unconstitutional language requirements on the citizens of Puerto Rico, unlike some proposals that were advanced in Congress.

I have always called for enabling Puerto Ricans to choose among options available for their future: continuing the Commonwealth arrangement, independence, or statehood—whatever future decided by majority choice. The House action is a victory for democracy and against exclusion. It is consistent with our country's repeated commitment to Puerto Rican self-determination, and consistent with the pride all Americans can take in the contributions those of Hispanic descent have made to all America.

**Statement on the New Railroad Station for New York City**

*March 4, 1998*

Last October, at the request of Senator Moynihan, the White House began meetings with the Department of Transportation, the U.S. Postal Service, the General Services Administration, Amtrak, the Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation, and local officials to find a way to designate the James Farley Post Office Building in New York City as the new home for Penn Station.

Today I am happy to announce that an accord has been reached on Penn Station and plans to restore the James Farley Post Office Building are now underway. I applaud Senator Moynihan's leadership and those involved in creating this magnificent opportunity.

In 1993, I asked Congress to act on a vision to build a new, beautiful railroad station in Manhattan worthy of the future and worthy of New York City. Today that vision has become a reality.

**Memorandum on Vietnamese Cooperation in Accounting for United States Prisoners of War and Missing in Action**

*March 4, 1998*

Presidential Determination No. 98-16

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Vietnamese Cooperation in Accounting for United States Prisoners of War and Missing in Action (POW/MIA)

As provided under section 609 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998, Public Law 105-119, I hereby determine, based on all information available to the United States Government, that the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is fully cooperating in good faith with the United States in the following four areas related to achieving the fullest possible accounting for Americans unaccounted for as a result of the Vietnam War:

- (1) resolving discrepancy cases, live sightings, and field activities;
- (2) recovering and repatriating American remains;
- (3) accelerating efforts to provide documents that will help lead to the fullest possible accounting of POW/MIAs; and
- (4) providing further assistance in implementing trilateral investigations with Laos.

I further determine that the appropriate laboratories associated with POW/MIA accounting are thoroughly analyzing remains, material, and other information, and fulfilling their responsibilities as set forth in subsection (B) of section 609, and information pertaining to this accounting is being made available to immediate family members in compliance with 50 U.S.C. 435 note.

I have been advised by the Department of Justice and believe that section 609 is unconstitutional because it purports to use a condition on appropriations as a means to direct my execution of responsibilities that the Constitution commits exclusively to the President. I am providing this determination as a matter of comity, while reserving the position that the condition enacted in section 609 is unconstitutional.

In making this determination I have taken into account all information available to the United States Government as reported to me, the full range of ongoing accounting activities in Vietnam, including joint and unilateral Vietnamese efforts, and the concrete results we have attained as a result.

Finally, in making this determination, I wish to reaffirm my continuing personal commitment to the entire POW/MIA community, especially to the immediate families, relatives, friends, and supporters of these brave individuals, and to reconfirm that the central, guiding principle of my Vietnam policy is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of our prisoners of war and missing in action.

You are authorized and directed to report this determination to the appropriate committees of the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

**William J. Clinton**

## **Notice—Continuation of Iran Emergency**

*March 4, 1998*

On March 15, 1995, by Executive Order 12957, I declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. On May 6, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12959 imposing more comprehensive sanctions to further respond to this threat, and on August 19, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13059 consolidating and clarifying these previous orders.

Because the actions and policies of the Government of Iran continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on March 15, 1995, must continue in effect beyond March 15, 1998. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Iran. Because the emergency declared by Executive Order 12957 constitutes an emergency separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, this renewal is distinct from the emergency renewal of October 1997. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 4, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
8:45 a.m., March 5, 1998]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on March 6.

## **Message to the Congress Transmitting a Notice on Iran**

*March 4, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication. This emergency is separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the Iranian hostage crisis and therefore requires separate renewal of emergency authorities.

The factors that led me to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, have not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad programs I have authorized pursuant to the March 15, 1995, declaration of emergency.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 4, 1998.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders  
Transmitting a Report on the Korean  
Peninsula Energy Development  
Organization**

*March 4, 1998*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organization and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

**Message to the Congress Reporting  
on Payments to Cuba**

*March 4, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

This report is submitted pursuant to 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6) (the "CDA"), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104-114 (March 12, 1996), 110 Stat. 785, 22 U.S.C. 6021-91 (the "LIBERTAD Act"), which requires that I report to the Congress on a semiannual basis detailing payments made to Cuba by any United States person as a result of the provision of telecommunications services authorized by this subsection.

The CDA, which provides that telecommunications services are permitted between the United States and Cuba, specifically authorizes the President to provide for payments to Cuba by license. The CDA states that licenses may be issued for full or partial settlement of telecommunications services with Cuba, but may not require any withdrawal from a blocked account. Follow-

ing enactment of the CDA on October 23, 1992, a number of U.S. telecommunications companies successfully negotiated agreements to provide telecommunications services between the United States and Cuba consistent with policy guidelines developed by the Department of State and the Federal Communications Commission.

Subsequent to enactment of the CDA, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) amended the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 515 (the "CACR"), to provide for specific licensing on a case-by-case basis for certain transactions incident to the receipt or transmission of telecommunications between the United States and Cuba, 31 C.F.R. 515.542(c), including settlement of charges under traffic agreements.

The OFAC has issued eight licenses authorizing transactions incident to the receipt or transmission of telecommunications between the United States and Cuba since the enactment of the CDA. None of these licenses permits payments to the Government of Cuba from a blocked account. For the period July 1 through December 31, 1997, OFAC-licensed U.S. carriers reported payments to the Government of Cuba in settlement of charges under telecommunications traffic agreements as follows:

AT&T Corporation (formally, American Telephone and Telegraph Company) .....	\$11,991,715
AT&T de Puerto Rico .....	298,916
Global One (formerly, Sprint Incorporated) .....	3,180,886
IDB WorldCom Services, Inc. (formerly, IDB Communications, Inc.) .....	4,128,371
MCI International, Inc. (formerly, MCI Communications Corporation) .....	4,893,699
Telefonica Larga Distancia de Puerto Rico, Inc. ....	105,848
WilTel, Inc. (formerly, WilTel Underseas Cable, Inc.) .....	5,608,751



WorldCom, Inc. (formerly, LDDS Communications, Inc.) .....	2,887,684
	<hr/>
	\$33,095,870

I shall continue to report semiannually on telecommunications payments to the Government of Cuba from United States persons.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 4, 1998.

**Remarks Announcing the Selection  
of Lieutenant Colonel Eileen M.  
Collins, USAF, as the First Woman  
Space Mission Commander**

*March 5, 1998*

I'm getting my facts straight. *[Laughter]* First of all, let me say that Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here. The story Hillary told about her fascination with space is not apocryphal; it is real. I heard it a long time before I ever thought she would be telling it before a microphone. And so this is a thrilling day for us.

I want to thank Dan Goldin and all the people at NASA for doing an absolutely superb job. Thank you, Colonel Collins, for your remarks and your example. To the Members of Congress who are here, Congressman Houghton and Representatives Jackson Lee, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and Zoe Lofgren, thank you for your support. I want to thank my Science Adviser, Jack Gibbons, as well as Sally Ride and Jean Phelan, a pioneer aviator, who are here.

Let me also say that Colonel Collins' husband is also a pilot, and when she introduced him to me, she said, "He's not only a pilot, he's a scratch golfer; he's better than you are." *[Laughter]* And after a brief conversation, we actually concluded it was more likely that I would go into space than that I would ever be as good as he is. *[Laughter]*

Forty years ago, Life magazine introduced America's first astronauts to the world, noting that the seven Mercury astronauts were picked from, quote, "the same general mold." They were all military pilots. They

were all in their thirties. They all had crew cuts. *[Laughter]* They were all men. And they really were all true American heroes. But heroes come in every size and shape and gender. Today we celebrate the falling away of another barrier in America's quest to conquer the frontiers of space and also to advance the cause of equality.

I'm proud to be here to congratulate Colonel Eileen Collins on becoming the first woman to command a space shuttle mission. She may not fit the exact mold of 40 years ago, but she clearly embodies the essential qualities of all our astronauts, then and now, the bold, restless, pioneering spirit that had made our Nation great. And as we've already heard, the story of her life is a story of challenges set and challenges met. That is also the story of our space program.

When it comes to exploring space and the unknown, the word "impossible" is not in our vocabulary. We have always recognized the limitless possibilities of seemingly impossible challenges.

A generation ago, President Kennedy said within a decade we would send an American to the Moon and bring him safely back to Earth. By 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin had left their footprints on the Moon. We said, in our time, that we would visit the planets of the solar system. And last Fourth of July all Americans, with the help of a robot called *Sojourner*, got a chance to rove the surface of Mars and meet red rocks named Scooby Doo and Barnacle Bill.

Thirty-six years after John Glenn made his history-making space flight in a capsule the size of a compact car, he's not only going back into space, but we are poised to build an international space station the size of a football field. America has indeed become, as President Kennedy hoped, the world's leading spacefaring nation, a distinction we must keep in the 21st century.

Colonel Collins will lead us in this effort, commanding a mission to launch a telescope that will allow us to peer into the deepest reaches of outer space. Our balanced budget for 1999 will support, in fact, 28 new space missions, missions that will help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes, of ancient stars, and of our Earth itself. Indeed,

later today NASA will be making some exciting new announcements on the results of the *Lunar Prospector* mission, currently orbiting the moon.

The knowledge we gain from our space missions could help us treat diseases here on Earth, from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer. It could make our farms more productive. It could help us meet the challenge of global climate change. And perhaps help us to uncover the very origins of life itself.

All Americans, especially our young people, have important roles to play in making these plans a reality. They have to begin by taking their studies, especially their studies in math and science, seriously.

Last week we learned that our leading spacefaring nation is not faring very well when it comes to achievement of high school seniors in math and science. This is unacceptable. As we prepare for an information age that will require every student to master not just the basics of reading and math, but algebra, geometry, physics, and computer science, I call on every parent, every school, every teacher to set higher expectations for our children. And I call upon all of our students—and I know that Hillary and Eileen will today—to take these challenging courses, so that we can all be prepared for the known and still unknown challenges of the future. And I call on all young girls across America and their parents to take inspiration from Colonel Collins' achievement.

Let me remind you of something she was too modest to say. She has a distinguished degree from Syracuse University. She came up through the ROTC program. She began her high school education in community college. I want every child in this country to know that we have opened the doors of college to all Americans, that community college is virtually free for all children now, that everybody can make this start and nobody needs to put blinders on their aspirations for the future. She is proof.

I want to say, especially to the little girls who will hear Eileen Collins and these who will see her and to their parents, let's remember that at a time when very few girls were taking the hardest math and science courses, Colonel Collins was taking them and mastering them. She did in part because of the un-

failing support of her parents who set high expectations and told her she could do anything she set her mind to. She never gave up, and one by one her dreams came true.

I think our country owes a great debt of gratitude to her parents, and I hope that more will follow her direction. And perhaps with her well-justified new fame, notoriety, the greatest mark Colonel Collins will make will not just be written in the stars but here on Earth, in the mind of every young girl with a knack for numbers, the gift for science, and a fearless spirit. Let us work to make sure that for every girl and every boy, dreams and ambitions can be realized, and even the sky is no longer the limit.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:34 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Col. Collins' husband, J. Patrick Youngs, and her parents, James and Rose Collins; former astronaut Sally K. Ride; and aviation pioneer Jean Ross Howard-Phelan.

### **Remarks Prior to Discussions With the Medicare Commission and an Exchange With Reporters**

*March 5, 1998*

**The President.** Good day, everyone. I am glad to be joined here by members of the Medicare Commission. In a few moments we will talk for the very first time about what we have to do as Americans to preserve Medicare, a system that has served our country so well for 33 years now. It's more than a program; it is a way we honor our duty to our parents and build a future for our children. It has been one of the great achievements of American society in the 20th century.

We've already done a lot in the last few years to strengthen Medicare: The balanced budget will extend the Medicare Trust Fund for at least a decade; \$20 billion has been saved by reducing fraud abuse and mismanagement in the system; we're giving people on Medicare a wider range of health plan choices and preventive services, including mammograms and diabetes management.

When Medicare was first passed into law, President Johnson said, and I quote, "It

proved that the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times." I'm confident that the Medicare Commission will help us to build a new consensus to meet the challenges of a new era, strengthening Medicare for the 21st century and giving our people the security they need to thrive.

I'd like to thank Senator Breaux for agreeing to chair the Commission. He has a long-standing record, both in his work on the Aging Commission and the Finance Committee—the Aging Committee and the Finance Committee—of working to develop consensus on important issues affecting our senior citizens.

I'd also like to thank Congressman Thomas for his leadership on this issue and on the Commission. He is well known for his expertise on the Medicare program. He shepherded the Medicare provisions in the Balanced Budget Act through and helped to assure that we could achieve bipartisan agreement on these reforms. And for that I am very, very grateful.

So I'd like now to give the Vice President and Senator Breaux and Congressman Thomas a chance to say a few words.

[At this point, the Vice President, Senator John B. Breaux, and Representative William M. Thomas made brief remarks.]

### **President's Deposition**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you upset by the leaking of your Jones deposition—or did you people actually do the leaking?

**The President.** Well, let me say, the court has made it absolutely clear that it is illegal to leak or to discuss it. And I think, Mr. Donaldson, [Sam Donaldson, ABC News] I should follow the law. And so I don't have anything else to say. I know you've got to ask the question; it's your job. But I'm going to just do my job. That's what I'm doing here. And I'm going to follow the law. That's what I wish everyone else would do.

**Q.** Sir, you never answered the important questions that I think a lot of people out there would like to hear you on it.

**The President.** Well, I believe I have given all the answers that matter. And I don't have anything else to say at this time. I'm just going to go back and do my job.

**Q.** Mr. President, do you stand by the facts in the deposition as reported by the newspaper?

**Senator John D. Rockefeller IV.** Do you care what Medicare is, Sam? Do you care what Medicare is?

**Q.** We all care, sir. Mr. President, it says in the deposition as reported that you asked Betty Currie to see if she could help Monica Lewinsky get a job.

**The President.** For one thing, I haven't read the article. For another thing, I don't know whether the article is accurate or not. Finally, whether it is or not, it is against the law. The judge has ordered us neither to release such materials or to discuss them. Somebody in this case ought to follow the law. I intend to be that person, so that I can go back to work about these things. I have nothing else to say.

**Q.** Things have gotten very personal between you and Kenneth Starr, Mr. President. It seems to have gotten very personal between you and Kenneth Starr, Mr. President. I'm asking a question not about the deposition.

**The President.** Sam never quits. He never quits.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

### **Statement on the House Banking Committee Vote on Funding for the International Monetary Fund**

*March 5, 1998*

I want to congratulate members of both parties in the House Banking Committee who have voted to give the International Monetary Fund the resources it needs to deal with the risks to financial stability around the world. This bipartisan legislation will help ensure that the IMF has the funds it needs to protect American jobs and exports.

The American economy continues to demonstrate its remarkable strength, and we must do everything we can to keep it on a path of steady growth. That is why we will work to build broad bipartisan support for this legislation as it moves forward in Congress. It is vital that the Congress move as

quickly as possible to support full funding for the IMF.

### **Remarks at the Screening of "Earth to the Moon"**

*March 5, 1998*

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to all. Thank you, John Kennedy, for those wonderful remarks. Thank you, Jeff Bewkes, for taking a chance on this project. I know it's a big, big project. I predict it will get a big, big response from the American people. Thank you, Tom Hanks, and thank all of you who were part of this.

I'd also like to thank the people at NASA, with whom you worked—I'm sure many of them are here—for the work they do every day. I thank all the astronauts who are here. And we're especially proud of Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Collins, who will be our first woman mission leader very soon.

There's not much more that needs to be said. But as one of the graduates of the class of 1968, I want to thank all of you for saving 1968 all over again. *[Laughter]*

Hillary, today, when we honored Eileen Collins, pointed out that when she was a young girl she wrote off to NASA and asked for information about how to be an astronaut. And she was told that, at the time, women were not welcome in the program. Today, we see that change.

The growth of the space program and the way it's changed and strengthened is in many ways evidence of the growth of America over the last three decades. And I think any of us who had anything to do with it have been profoundly proud of it. Hillary mentioned the Mars mission that seemed, once again, to sort of spark the popular imagination in our Nation for the space program with the wonderful *Sojourner* looking around for red rocks with wonderful names like Scooby Doo. *[Laughter]*

You know, the international space station will be up before long, and it will literally be the size of a football field. Now, the vehicle John Glenn went up in over 35 years ago was about the size of a compact car. And when the space station is there, it will change forever the way people can relate to the

Earth and to the other planets in the solar system. All of this has happened for a lot of reasons.

There are Members of Congress here, and I thank them for their presence. Congress continued to support the space station and space program against the kinds of criticisms that are still current today that John so eloquently chronicled from the 1960's. President Kennedy wanted us to become the world's leading spacefaring nation, and we have. I want us to continue that distinction well into the 21st century. It is profoundly important to us. Colonel Collins, for example, will lead us in an effort to launch a telescope that will allow us to peer into the deepest reaches of outer space. The new balanced budget will support 28 more space missions, to help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes, of ancient stars, of the Earth itself.

The knowledge we gain from these missions will help us to solve problems here on Earth, from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer. It will help to make our farms more productive. It will help us to deal with the crisis of global warming. And as the distinguished scientist Stephen Hawking, who will be in this place tomorrow night, has pointed out, it may well help us uncover the very origins of human life itself.

I hope all of you who are part of this project will be able to look back 10, 20, 30, 40 years from now with immense pride that you have once again sparked the imagination, the dreams, the hopes, and the courage of the American people to follow our astronauts into space and to follow our imaginations wherever they lead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

There are so many wonderful people here tonight, I hesitate to acknowledge anyone. But someone who helped us all get through that era is here: Walter Cronkite, thank you very much for your presence.

And now Hillary and I would like to invite you all into the State Dining Room for a reception, where we will try to stay on both feet, on the ground. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, and bless you. Let's go in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the East Room at the White House, following the screening of an episode of the Home Box Office production. In his remarks, he referred to John F. Kennedy, Jr., son of President John F. Kennedy; Jeff Bewkes, chairman, Home Box Office; and actor Tom Hanks.

### **Proclamation 7072—National Older Workers Employment Week, 1998**

*March 5, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Americans are living longer, healthier lives. As a Nation, we are witnessing a dramatic growth in the population of Americans aged 55 and older, a trend that will continue well into the next century. To maintain our dynamic economy and to fill the jobs of the 21st century, we must make the most of the creative potential and productive capacity of this growing segment of our society.

Unfortunately, many Americans aged 55 and older encounter serious difficulty finding employment when they lose their jobs or seek to change careers. Employers too often focus on the age of older workers instead of their qualifications and strong work ethic. By failing to recognize the wealth of skills and experience older workers can bring to their jobs, such employers deny them an equal opportunity to make their own valuable contributions to the American workplace.

To counter these challenges, laws and government programs offer older workers the protections and services they need to ensure fair employment opportunities and practices. The Age Discrimination Act, the Older Americans Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act protect the basic rights of millions of older working Americans. The Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services also assist older workers through such efforts as the Senior Community Service Employment Program and the programs of the Administration on Aging.

Older Americans actively contribute to our communities through their hard work, wisdom, and experience. They have rightly

earned our admiration and respect; they have also earned a fair chance at a good job. As we observe National Older Workers Employment Week, I urge all employers, when they hire new workers, to consider carefully the skills and other qualifications of men and women aged 55 and older and to fully utilize this rich national resource.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 8 through March 14, 1998, as National Older Workers Employment Week. I encourage all Americans to recognize the contributions that older workers make to the workplace and to our economy, and I urge public officials responsible for job placement, training, and related services to intensify their efforts throughout the year to help older Americans find suitable jobs and training.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 10, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 6, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on March 11.

### **Remarks on the National Economy**

*March 6, 1998*

Good morning. Today we received more good news for our workers and our families. Our economy added another 310,000 new jobs last month; real wages continued to rise; unemployment fell to 4.6 percent, the lowest level in a quarter century; and more Americans are sharing in the prosperity. Hispanic unemployment, for example, fell to a record low.

The American economy has now added more than 15 million new jobs since I took office. Inflation has remained low and stable.

We continue to have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment in a quarter century, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. We're on track to have the longest peacetime recovery in the history of our country. These are good times for America.

But how shall we maintain this momentum? We must first press forward with this new economic strategy. It is working. We must do more also to continue to create high-wage jobs. And finally, we must make sure that our people have the skills to fill them.

The new economy is increasingly driven by creativity, innovation, and technology, with high-skill jobs growing at nearly 3 times the rate of other jobs. In the field of information technology, the hunt for employees with high-tech skills is becoming more and more intense. There are hundreds of thousands of vacancies out there in America right now.

The key to expanding opportunity is education and training. Through our new HOPE scholarships, the lifetime learning credits, education IRA's, expanded Pell grant scholarships, better student loans, we've opened the door to college for all people of all ages who are willing to work for it.

Recently, we learned that our high school seniors lagged behind the rest of the industrial world in math and science. We must do more there. We must work to raise standards, reduce class size, improve teaching, have people taking more challenging courses, and increase accountability.

But we also, to look at the immediate situation, must do more to reform our job training system. For more than 3 years, I have called on Congress to consolidate the tangle of training programs we have today into a "GI bill" for workers, to create a network of one-stop career centers, to increase accountability, to ensure results, to empower people to gain the skills that are in greatest market demand. Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley, who are here with me today, are working in particular to address the job shortage in the information technology area.

Now, last year a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed a bill that would achieve the goals that I have called for for years now. A similar bill has attracted bipartisan support in the Senate. I'm encour-

aged by reports that the Senate is likely to take up this legislation. In the wake of these employment numbers, with unemployment low and the crying demand for higher skills and still people in some of our inner-city neighborhoods and rural areas unemployed, I ask the Senate to pass this bill and send it to me so that I can sign it into law. The legislation is essentially to help more Americans win in today's economy and to keep our recovery going.

Unemployment is low, job growth is strong, our economy is expanding at a healthy pace. We are uniquely poised now to widen the circle of opportunity for the 21st century. Passing the "GI bill" for America's workers is one of the best ways we can continue to grow.

Thank you, and thank you to the economic team and congratulations to the American people. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

### **Statement on Senate Action To Continue the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Initiative**

*March 6, 1998*

I am pleased that the Senate, in a strong bipartisan vote of 58 to 37, today retained the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program within the ISTEA bill, which provides expanded economic opportunity for women- and minority-owned businesses. This program was enacted into law under President Reagan in response to extremely low participation rates by women and minorities in federally assisted highway and transit construction projects.

In particular, I want to applaud Senators Baucus and Chafee, who garnered widespread support for the continuation of this important program.

Today's vote reaffirms my administration's "Amend it; don't end it" approach to affirmative action and promoting equal opportunity. We are now one step closer to getting an important, multi-billion transportation bill enacted into legislation.

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## **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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### **February 28**

In the afternoon, the President traveled from Salt Lake City, UT, to Los Angeles, CA. He returned to Salt Lake City in the evening, arriving after midnight.

### **March 1**

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

### **March 2**

The President announced his intention to nominate Thelma J. Askey, Jennifer Anne Hillman, and Stephen Koplan as Commissioners on the U.S. International Trade Commission.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Santiago, Chile, April 16–20 for a state visit and to attend the second Summit of the Americas.

### **March 3**

In the evening, the President traveled to New York City, and later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arthur A. McGiverin to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert H. Beatty, Jr., to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Miles Lerman as Chair and member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint John H. Catlin, Pamela Young-Holmes, and Donna L. Sorkin to serve as members of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Norman R. Augustine as Principal

Officer and member of the Board of Governors of the American National Red Cross.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marvin F. (Bud) Moss to serve as a member of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

The President declared a major disaster in Kentucky and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm on February 4–6.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter coastal storm, high winds, and flooding on February 4–9.

The President and Hillary Clinton announced that Cambridge University physicist Stephen Hawking will be guest lecturer at the second Millennium Evening at the White House on March 6.

### **March 4**

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph W. Westphal to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works at the Department of Defense.

The President requested emergency funding from Congress to support military operations in Bosnia and Southwest Asia and meet urgent needs created by recent natural disasters.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Westport, CT, and Cincinnati, OH, on March 10.

### **March 5**

The President announced his intention to nominate Shirley Elizabeth Barnes to be Ambassador to Madagascar.

### **March 6**

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles R. Stith to be Ambassador to Tanzania.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arthur Levitt, Jr., as Chair and Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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**Nominations  
Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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**Submitted March 3**

Thelma J. Askey,  
of Tennessee, to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for the remainder of the term expiring December 16, 2000, vice Peter S. Watson, resigned.

Jennifer Anne Hillman,  
of Indiana, to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for the term expiring December 16, 2006, vice Don E. Newquist, term expired.

Stephen Koplan,  
of Virginia, to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for the term expiring June 16, 2005, vice Janet A. Nuzum, resigned.

**Submitted March 4**

Robert H. Beatty, Jr.,  
of West Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring August 30, 2004 (reappointment).

Arthur A. McGiverin,  
of Iowa, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2000, vice Janie L. Shores, term expired.

David M. Mason,  
of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2003, vice Trevor Alexander McClurg Potter, resigned.

**Submitted March 6**

Joseph W. Westphal,  
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army, vice H. Martin Lancaster.

Arthur Levitt, Jr.,  
of New York, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the term expiring June 5, 2003 (reappointment).

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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**Released March 2**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers on Internal Revenue Service reforms

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton To Travel to Chile for Summit of the Americas and State Visit

**Released March 3**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the President's upcoming visit to Westport, CT, and Cincinnati, OH

Advance text of the President's remarks at the 75th anniversary celebration of Time magazine in New York City

**Released March 4**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcripts of a press briefing by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, FDA Acting Administrator Michael Friedman, and U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky on food safety legislation



***Released March 5***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

***Released March 6***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by the Press Secretary: Continuation of U.N. Sanctions on Libya

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.

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